

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed December 2, 2005, Claims 1, 6, and 24-27 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson (U.S. Patent 4,947,366) in view of RuDusky (U.S. Patent Application 2003/0028408). Claims 2, 12-16, 21, 22, and 29-32 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson as applied to Claims 1, 6 and 24-27 and further in view of Loyer et al. (U.S. Patent 6,298,396, hereinafter "Loyer"). Applicants note that, while the summary of the rejection of Claims 2, 12-16, 21, 22, and 29-32 does not list RuDusky as a reference, specific reference is made to RuDusky in the other paragraphs of the Office Action in making the rejections of each independent claim.

However, Applicants point out that RuDusky was filed on February 23, 2001, after the December 8, 2000 filing date for the current application. RuDusky makes no claim for priority to an earlier filed application. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of the claims under 35 USC §103(a) in view of RuDusky are improper, and that the rejections should be withdrawn and the claims should be allowed.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that Claims 1-2, 6, 12-16, and 21-22, 24-27, and 29-32 are in condition for allowance and, therefore, a Notice of Allowance of Claims 1-2, 6, 12-16, and 21-22, 24-27, and 29-32 is respectfully requested. If the Examiner's next action is other than allowance as requested, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at (408) 879-6149.

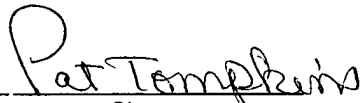
Respectfully submitted,



Kim Kanzaki  
Attorney for Applicants  
Reg. No. 37,652

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. BOX 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on January 31, 2006.

Pat Tompkins  
Name



Signature